1481 d.d.d. 69

A

Bosome-Piece

FOR

COMMUNICANTS.

OR, THE

Nature and *Design*

OF THE

SACRAMENT

Of the LORD's-SUPPER.

Laid Open in a Letter to Mrs. ELIZ. YEARLEY, of *Ockham* in *Surrey*.

By JOSHUA STANLEY, Late Chaplain to the Lady *Nicholas*.

LONDON,
Printed in the Year, 1699.

To my truly Virtuous Cozen,
Mrs. ELIZ. YEARLEY,
of Ockham *in* Surry.

Madam, my dear Cozen!

I *muſt of neceſſity, return this* Boſome-Piece *into your Breſt again, leſt (unhappily) my Cold Affections Congeal ſo warm a Subject. Truly, I am apt often to Cenſure my ſelf with being a bad maſter to ſo Divine a piece; and fancy that it longs to be remitted Home, where it may follow it's wonted Exerciſe with a more Zealous Divinity. Take it, then, Madam, my dear Cozen! but not with a Belief, that it has made no Impreſſion on my obdurate Heart; but, to the Contrary, ſince thro' it's Merit, and the Author's Worth, I have made it to the Life Univerſal.*

As to the Late Reverend Mr. Stanley's *Letter, I have Presum'd to Intitle it*; A Bosome-Piece for Communicants, *&c. For*, What Breſt-Plate ſo Armor-proof againſt the Aſſaults of Death and Hell, as the bleſſed Sacrament of our Redeemer's Body and Blood? — *A* Breſt-plate *as well to be worn by the* Fair Sex, *as others, to the making 'em* Champions *over the Vaſſals of Sin, and compleat* Heroeſſes *in Divinity, under the* Banner *of their* GOD!

In fine, the World may give a large Gueſs how Divine a Soul the now Happy Author had, and how cloſe his Zeal kept him to the Altar of his holy Jeſus, by the following Letter; *which is, at your Command return'd Home in a more Univerſal Dreſs, from him who is,*

Madam, my dear Cozen!

your Humble Servant,

Jan. 12. 1698.

Benj. Harris, jun^r.

A

BOSOME-PIECE

FOR

Communicants:

In a LETTER.

Betty!

BECAUSE you Desire to Receive the Sacrament, (and if you did not Desire it, you would not be Fit to Receive it:) 'tis Fit you should Understand in some Measure, the

Meaning of what you Do, and what you Receive, that so your Desires may be Increased in some Proportion to the Excellency of the Thing, and your Zeal may not be altogether without Knowledge. Therefore be Pleased to Accept, for the present, this Plain and Easy Direction.

I. *What a Sacrament is.* FIRST, It is Fit you should Understand, What a *Sacrament* is.

A *Sacrament* is a Seal of the Promises of GOD, made to us in CHRIST, wherein, by some Outward Signs, Commanded by GOD, and Blessed

Bleſſed by His Miniſter, our bleſſed Saviour, with all the Bleſſings he hath purchas'd for us, is Signifyed and Conveyed to our Souls; and (that we may not Doubt) 'tis likewiſe a Pledge and Earneſt of all thoſe Things.

AND, the Reaſon that GOD gives us Spiritual Bleſſings, by Outward and Viſible Signs, is, That He may condeſcend to our weak Capacities, to Help our Infirmities, and Underſtandings, and to Strengthen our Faith, and to mind us of His Covenant with us, and of Ours with Him; for He Promiſes, Mercy, Grace,

Peace, and Pardon here, and
Eternal Life Hereafter, to
all those that keep His Com-
mandments, and come unto
Him by Jesus Christ; and
we, for our part, promise all
Duty, and Love, and a sin-
cere Obedience, to him again.

It's Nature opened briefly.

NOW as for the *Sacrament* of the *Lord's-Supper*, I shall lay down the Nature and Design of it in the plainest method I can devise; deriving it from the very Fountain, by explaining those Texts of Scripture, wherein we find it describ'd.

Luc. 22. 19. [*This do in remembrance of Me*] This is a Command

of

of CHRIST, which makes it an indispensable Duty to every one that calls himself a Christian, to come to the *Sacrament*, as soon as he understands it; and when he is come, it tells him, That 'tis his Duty to remember that great Love, and bitter Sufferings of CHRIST dying for his Sins; which, how great soever, if we consider the Malice of some, and the Frailties of all, might have been forgotten; unless remembred, and continually fixed in our minds, by some visible Sign or Token: And so by this — 1 Cor. 11. 24.

1 Cor. 11. 26. [WE shew the LORD's Death till he come.] That is, Declare openly, that we do seriously, and heartily Believe, that CHRIST did Dye for us, to Redeem us, and procure great Blessings for us; some of which He bestows here, especially in the *Sacrament*; and some of which He faithfully keeps for us hereafter. And besides this, We shew, and offer unto GOD the Father, the Sufferings, the Obedience, and Sacrifice of his Dear Son, pleading them, for that Pardon, and those Graces, which we want: And this we do with all possible Praise, Humility,

mility, and Thankſgiving. And ſo 'tis call'd,

[*The Cup of Bleſſing*;] 1 *Cor.*10. 16.
Wherein we offer up our hearty Praiſes, and Adoration,

To GOD the Father, who gave His Son for us; and now is ready to give him to us.

To GOD the Son, who gave Himſelf for us; and now offers Himſelf to us, and to His Father for us. And,

To GOD the Holy Ghoſt, thro' whom Chriſt was offered up; and who now conveys Him to us, with all the Benefits of that Eternal and Glorious

Sacrifice. And so tis call'd,

1 *Cor.* 10. 16. [*THE Communion of the Body, and Blood of* CHRIST.] That is, a holy Ordinance and Institution, whereby GOD the Father does communicate, and impart to worthy Receivers, all the Benefits of CHRIST's Incarnation, Passion, Resurrection, and Ascention; all which is meant by the Body and Blood of CHRIST, and all which good things are conveyed to us, and by those outward Signs of Bread and Wine.

AND therefore, (saith CHRIST) after He had broke, and blessed the Bread,

Take,

Take, Eat, this is my Body, and for the Cup, *This is my Blood*. Not that they are really so indeed; for you may see, and taste it to be Bread and Wine; but they are the Figures, and Representations of the Body and Blood of CHRIST. In Pictures, we say, this Picture is a Man, and this is an Angel; that is, these Pictures do represent such things. And therefore, when you see the Bread blessed, and broken by the Minister, then lift up your Heart, and imagine to your self, that you behold your dear Saviour's Body torn with Whips and Scourges, Crucified, and dying upon the Cross: And so

Mat. 26. 26. *Luc.* 22. 19. 1 *Cor.* 11. 24.

so likewise, when the Wine is poured forth in Consecration; think you see your Saviour's Side pierced, and His precious Blood streaming forth upon every penitent Sinner, to wash away his Stains and Corruptions: And then, think more sadly with your self, that your Sins have often done the same, and been as cruel in Crucifying the Lord of Glory, and putting him to an open shame; and be mighty Humble, and mighty Thankful.

Mat. 26. 28. *Luc.* 22. 20. FOR, *this is the Blood of the New Testament, which is shed for you, and for many, for*

for the Remission of Sins. 1 Cor. 11. 25.
Now, this New Testament is nothing else, but the Second Covenant, confirmed to us in the Blood of JESUS, wherein GOD promises Pardon to every Sinner that truly Repents, and Grace and Peace, in this Life, and Glory hereafter; And here it is in this *Sacrament*, which is called the Blood of the New Testament, that GOD Offers, and Seals, and Conveys to our Souls, all these Promises, and Blessings; and we by Faith do receive them, and at the same time enter into Covenant with him, to perform a Faithful, and

Sincere

Sincere Obedience to all His Commands.

NOW, from these Places of Scripture, thus Explained, and made easy for any Capacity, You may Observe, That this is the *Nature* and *Design* of the *Sacrament* of the LORD's Supper.

☞ *THAT it is a Feast of Mercies, wherein we thankfully remember the Great Love, and Bitter Sufferings of* CHRIST; *and firmly Believe to be a Seal of that Gracious Covenant, which* GOD *hath made with His Blood; and a Pledge or Earnest of all those Benefits He hath procur'd for us, by*

the

the Obedience of his Life and Death.

AND here then it is, my Friend, that with an humble penitent Heart, and a lively Faith working by Love, you may Expect to receive ſpiritual nouriſhment for your Soul; and ſuch increaſe of Grace, as will enable you more and more for the work of your Salvation, and the Subduing of your Corruptions, and the Reparing of your Infirmities, and the exerciſe of a Holy Religion, till GOD ſhall ſee you meet to be partaker of His Glory.

AND therefore, here you muſt offer up your Self,

your Soul and Body, as a reaſonable Sacrifice, which being joyned to that Oblation of CHRIST upon the Altar is well-pleaſing and acceptable unto GOD.

For you muſt underſtand that here the Miniſter offers up to God the Father, in the Name of all the Communicants, the Paſſion and Sacrifice of his dearly beloved Son, as a Sacrifice ſtill Freſh and Powerful for our Pardon and Salvation. And as the Miniſter does this here, in a Sacramental way, ſo Chriſt, the true Preiſt, does really offer up Himſelf in Heaven to His Father,

ther, for the Remiſſion and Expiation of all our Sins, who receive Him worthily; that is, with a true Repentance, and a lively Faith, a perfect Charity, and a great Love, Humility, and Devotion.

But as for your Preparation, you will find your ſelf beſt Inſtructed out of your Practice of Piety, and, The Whole Duty of Man.

Only, I beſeech you, my Friend, that you would be very, Extreamly careful in your Examination, at ſome time, when you can, with conveniency retire, in Pri-

vate; for upon that, will depend much of the Efficacy, and Force, and Sincerity of your Repentance, and So Conseqently your worthy Communicating. For which I shall desire you to look upon that Short Thing of Particulars, at the end of the Whole Duty of Man.

I commend this Form of the Explanation of the Sacrament to you, no longer, than you shall be better Provided for. I have design'd by this, to Ease your memory, and fix your Thoughts, and therefore I will trouble you no Further, but Commend

mend you to theſe Good Books; praying, That as you doe intend to receive The LORD JESUS CHRIST, ſo you would walk in Him; Rooted and built up in Him, and Stabliſhed in the Faith, wherein you have been Taught, abounding therein, with Thankſgiving. *Col.* 2. 6. 7.

Even ſo Prays your

True Friend

Joſhua Stanley.

A Prayer to be said before you receive the Sacrament.

O Most merciful God, Who hast in thy great goodness prepared this spiritual feast for sick and famished souls, make my desires and gasping after it, answerable to my needs of it. I have, with the prodigal, wasted that portion of grace thou bestowedst upon me; and therefore do infinitely want a supply out of this treasury: But, O Lord, how shall such a wretch as I dare to approach this holy Table? I am a Dog, how shall I presume to take the Childrens bread? Or how shall this spiritual Manna, this food of Angels, be given to one who hath chosen to feed on husks with swine? Nay, to one who hath already so often trampled these precious things under foot, either carelessly neglecting, or unworthily receiving these holy mysteries? O Lord, my horrible guiltiness makes me

me tremble to come, and yet makes me not dare to keep away: for where, O Lord, ſhall my polluted Soul be waſhed, if not in this fountain which thou haſt opened for ſin and for uncleanneſs, Hither therefore I come, and thou haſt promiſed, that him that cometh to thee, thou wilt in no wiſe caſt out: This is, O Lord, the blood of the New Teſtament; grant me ſo to receive it, that it may be to me for remiſſion of ſins, and though I have ſo often and ſo wretchedly broken my part of that Covenant, whereof this Sacrament is a Seal, yet be thou graciouſly pleaſed to make good thine; to be merciful to my unrighteouſneſs, and to remember my ſins and my iniquities no more; and not only ſo, but to put thy laws into my heart, and to write them in my mind, and by the Power of thy grace diſpoſe my Soul to ſuch a ſincere and conſtant obedience, that I may never again provoke thee. Lord, grant, that in

theſe

these holy mysteries I may not only commemorate, but effectually recieve my blessed Saviour, and all the benifits of his Passion: and to that end give me such a preparation of soul as may qualifie me for it, give me a deep sense of my sins and unworthiness, that being weary and heavy laden, I may be capable of his refreshings, & by being suppled in my own tears, I may be fitter to be washed in his Blood; raise up my dull and earthly mind from grovelling here below, and inspire it with a holy zeal, that I may with Spiritual Affection, approach this spiritual feast. And let, O Lord, that infinite love of Christ in dying for so wretched a sinner, inflame my frozen benummed Soul. and kindle in me that sacred fire of love to him, and that so vehement, that no waters may quench, no floods drown it, such as may burn up all dross, not leave one unmortified lust in my soul, and such as may also extend it self

to all whom thou haſt given me command and example to love, even enemies as well as friends. Finally, O Lord, I beſeech thee to clothe me in thy wedding garment, and make me, though of my ſelf moſt unworthy, yet by thy mercy an acceptable gueſt at this holy Table, that I may not eat and drink my own condemnation, but may have my pardon ſealed, and my weakneſs repaired, my corruptions ſubdued and my ſoul ſo inſeparably united to thee, that no temptations may ever be able to diſſolve the Union; but that being begun here in grace, it may be conſummated in glory. Grant this O Lord, for thy dear Sons ſake, Jeſus Chriſt.

Ejaculations to be uſed at the LORD's Table.

LORD, I am not worthy that thou ſhouldeſt come under my roof.

I have ſinned: What ſhall I do unto thee, O thou preſerver of men?

[*Here recollect ſome of thy greateſt Sins.*]

If thou, Lord, ſhouldſt be extream to mark what is done amiſs, O Lord, who may abide it.

But with the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plenteous Redemption.

Behold, O Lord, thy beloved Son, in whom thou art well pleaſed. Hearken to the cry of his blood, which ſpeaketh better things then that of *Abel.*

By his Agony and bloody Sweat, by his Croſs and Paſſion, good Lord deliver me.

O Lamb of God which takeſt away the ſins of the world, grant me thy Peace.

O Lamb of God which takeſt away the ſins of the world, have mercy upon me.

Imme-

Immediately before Receiving.

THou haſt ſaid that he that eateth thy Fleſh, and drinketh thy Blood, hath eternal Life.

Behold the ſervant of the Lord, be it unto me according to thy Word.

At the Receiving of the Bread.

BY thy Crucified Body deliver me from this body of death.

At the Receiving of the Cup.

O Let this blood of thine purge my Conſcience from dead works to ſerve the living God.

Lord, if thou wilt, thou canſt make me clean.

O touch me, and ſay, I will, be thou clean.

After

After Receiving.

WHat shall I render unto the Lord for all the benefits he hath done unto me?

I will take the Cup of Salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord.

Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.

Therefore blessing, honour, glory and power be to him that sitteth upon the Throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever. *Amen.*

I have sworn, and am stedfastly purposed to keep thy righteous judgments.

O hold thou up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not.

A Thanksgiving after the Receiving of the Sacrament.

OThou Fountain of all goodness, from whom every

good and Perfect gift cometh, and to whom all honour and glory ſhould be returned. I deſire with all the moſt fervent and inflamed affections of a grateful heart, to bleſs and praiſe thee for thoſe ineſtimable mercies thou haſt vouchſafed me. Lord, what is man that thou ſhouldeſt ſo regard him as to ſend thy beloved Son to ſuffer ſuch bitter things for him; But Lord, what am I, the worſt of men, that I ſhould have any part in this attonement, who have ſo often deſpiſed him, and his ſufferings? O the height and depth of this mercy of thine, that art pleaſed to admit me to the renewing of that Covenant with thee, which I have ſo often, and ſo diverſly broken! That I, who am not worthy of that daily bread which ſuſtains the body, ſhould be made partaker of this bread of life, which nouriſheth the ſoul; and O Lord God, ſuffer me no more

more, I beseech thee, to turn thy grace into wantonness, to make thy mercy an occasion of security, but let this unspeakable love of thine constrain me to obedience; that since my blessed Lord hath died for me, I may no longer live up to my self, but to him: O Lord, I know there is no concord between Christ and *Belial*, since he hath now been pleased to enter my heart, O let me never permit any lust to chase him thence, but let him that so dearly lov'd me, still keep possession of me, and let nothing ever take me out of his hand. To this end be thou graciously pleased to watch over me, and defend me from all my assaults of my spiritual enemies, but especially deliver me from my self, from the treachery of mine own heart, which is too willing to yield it self up a prey: And where thou seest I am either by nature or custom most weak, there

there do I beseech thee, magnify thy power in my preservation. (*Here mention thy most dangerous temptations.*) And, Lord, let my Saviour's sufferings for my sins, and the Vows I have now made against them, never depart from my mind, but let the remembrance of the one enable me to perform the other, that I may never make truce with those lusts which nailed his hands, pierced his side, and made his soul heavy to the death. But that having now new listed, my self under a new banner, I may fight manfully, and follow the Captain of my Salvation, even thrô a sea of blood. Lord, lift up my hands that hang down, and my feeble knees, that I faint not in this warfare; O be thou my strength, who am not able of my self to struggle with the slightest temptations. How often have I turned my back in the day of battel? How many of these Sacramental vows have I violated? And Lord,

I have ſtill the ſame unconſtant deceitful heart to betray me to the breach of this. O thou, who art *Yea*, and *Amen*, in whom there is no ſhadow of change, communicate to me, I beſeech thee, ſuch a ſtability of mind, that I may no more thus ſtart aſide like a broken bow, but that having my heart whole with thee, I may continue ſtedfaſt in thy Covenant, that not one good purpoſe which thy Spirit hath raiſed in me this day may vaniſh, as ſo many have formerly done, but that they may bring forth fruit unto life eternal. Grant this, O merciful Father, thrô the merits and mediations of my Crucified Saviour, *Amen.*

FINIS.

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